

Suggested Item for Commemorative DR Issue

On 20 July 1944 an attempt was made on Hitler's life, when one of his staff officers carried a bomb in a briefcase to a situation briefing in Hitler's field headquarters. The bomb exploded and killed several people present in the bunker. ~~Hitler, although wounded, escaped with his life.~~ Official Washington was aware of rumors that such an attempt had taken place, but did not know how successful it had been and there was an urgent need to know whether or not Hitler was still alive. In the evening of that day, while monitoring a Berlin newscast, I heard the Nazi radio announcer interrupt his regular newscast with a terse statement to the effect that Hitler was about to ~~make a radio statement~~ <sup>address the German people</sup>. A very angry Fuehrer then came on the air, confirming and describing the attempt on his life and how "Providence" had intervened to save his life. He then went into a tirade against the "traitorous" clique of officers who had conspired to do this, and identified the man who had placed the bomb in the bunker as a certain Count von Stauffenberg.

I typed a running account of the speech while it was in progress, and by the time Hitler had finished it, most of my summary was already moving on the [ ] wires to STATINTL

the White House, State Department, OWI, etc., answering the all important question of whether or not Hitler had been killed and Nazi Germany was without its leader at that critical point of World War II. Later that day, the speech, as monitored by me and filed <sup>on 14</sup> [redacted] carried verbatim STATINTL under a banner headline on the front page of the NEW YORK TIMES. It was also published in the daily [redacted] STATINTL at the time.

STATSPEC

[redacted]  
Chief, Europe/Africa/Latin America Division